

AMENDED IN SENATE JULY 2, 2003

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 6, 2003

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 10, 2003

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2003–04 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1594

**Introduced by Committee on Veterans Affairs (Parra (Chair),
Cohn, Kehoe, Matthews, Mullin, Nakano, Salinas, and Wiggins)
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Cogdill, Dutra, Lowenthal,
Mountjoy, Mullin, Runner, and Steinberg)**

February 21, 2003

An act to add Section 11139.4 to the Government Code, relating to veterans.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1594, as amended, Committee on Veterans Affairs. Discrimination: veterans.

Existing law prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, sex, or physical or mental disability under any program or activity that is conducted, operated, or administered by the state or by any state agency, is funded directly by the state, or receives any financial assistance from the state.

This bill would specify that the provision of housing exclusively for homeless veterans who possess significant barriers to social reintegration and employment is authorized by the state, and shall not be considered discrimination, notwithstanding any provision of state law or of local ordinances.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. *The Legislature hereby finds and declares all of*
2 *the following:*

3 (a) *It is estimated that veterans constitute nearly 30 percent of*
4 *California's homeless adult population.*

5 (b) *According to the United States Department of Veterans*
6 *Affairs, veterans are twice as likely to become homeless as*
7 *nonveterans. Women veterans are four times as like as non- veteran*
8 *women to become homeless.*

9 (c) *In its October 2002 report, "A Study on the Status of*
10 *Homeless Veterans in California," the California Department of*
11 *Veterans Affairs estimated that up to 55,000 veterans are homeless*
12 *on any given day in California, 27,000 in Los Angeles alone.*

13 (d) *There are less than 2,500 shelter and transitional beds*
14 *specifically available for homeless veterans in California.*

15 (e) *Homeless veterans experience multiple barriers to*
16 *employment, including long-term homelessness, unemployment,*
17 *underemployment, higher rates of hepatitis C, higher rates of adult*
18 *onset diabetes, physical and mental disability, posttraumatic*
19 *stress disorder, and substance abuse issues.*

20 (f) *Over 80 percent of homeless veterans who receive housing*
21 *and support services from veteran-specific programs successfully*
22 *avoid future homelessness.*

23 SEC. 2. Section 11139.4 is added to the Government Code, to
24 read:

25 11139.4. (a) It is the policy of this state and the purpose of this
26 section to facilitate and support the development and operation of
27 housing for homeless veterans who possess significant barriers to
28 social reintegration and employment due to physical and mental
29 disability, substance abuse, and the effects of long-term
30 homelessness that renders them unable to share housing with the
31 general homeless population.

32 (b) The provision of housing exclusively for veterans who
33 possess significant barriers to social reintegration and
34 employment is hereby authorized and shall not be considered
35 unlawful discrimination, notwithstanding any other provision of



1 law, including, but not limited to, Sections 51, 51.2, and 51.10 of
2 the Civil Code, Sections 11135, 12920, and 12955, Chapter 11.5
3 (commencing with Section 50800) of Part 2 of Division 31 of the
4 Health and Safety Code, and local housing discrimination
5 ordinances.

6 (c) This section shall occupy the field of regulation of housing
7 for veterans who possess significant barriers to social reintegration
8 and employment by any local public entity, including, but not
9 limited to, a city, county, and city and county.

10 (d) For purposes of this section, “housing for veterans” means
11 emergency, transitional, or permanent housing tied to supportive
12 services that assist veterans who possess significant barriers to
13 social reintegration and employment in stabilizing their lives and
14 developing the skills and resources they need to make a successful
15 transition to independent, self-sufficient lives.

